

In 1970 the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) published *The National Atlas of the United States of America™*. It was a 400-page, oversized, 12-pound collection of maps. In 1998, a new and innovative National Atlas will be published. This edition will include both electronic and paper map products and will exploit information management, access, and delivery technologies that didn't exist in 1970.

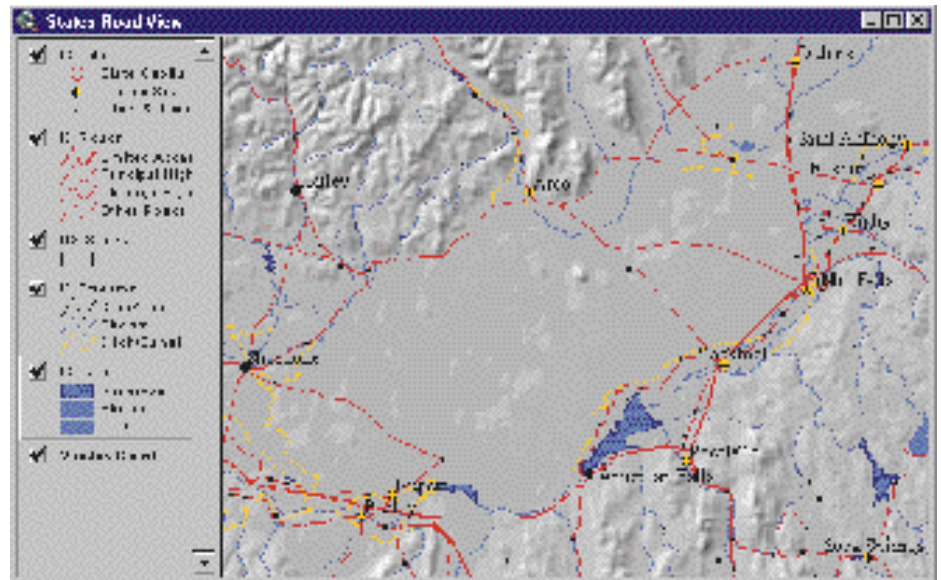
A New National View

The National Atlas of the United States of America™ will provide a comprehensive, map-like view into the enormous wealth of data collected by the Federal Government. The new National Atlas will accomplish the following:

- deliver authoritative scientific, societal, and historical information,
- provide easy-to-use tools to display, manipulate, and query National Atlas data so that customers can produce their own relevant information,
- make this information more accessible to individual Americans,
- provide a showcase for the geospatial data collected by Federal agencies,
- provide links to current and real-time events and to other Federal producers of geospatial information, and
- provide a national framework of well-maintained and documented base cartographic data for use by other Federal data contributors.

A Different and Improved National Atlas

How will a new National Atlas differ from the earlier edition? There will be many dissimilarities between the two, but three are noteworthy. First, though high-



quality maps will continue to be a product of *The National Atlas of the United States of America™*, the USGS will concentrate on producing compelling and useful electronic products. Second, the audience for this atlas is quite different. The USGS will cooperatively produce an atlas that becomes an essential reference for all home computer users. And finally, the new National Atlas will exploit information access and delivery technologies such as CD-ROM and the World Wide Web (WWW) that didn't exist in 1970.

New Products

The National Atlas of the United States of America™ will include four distinct products. In addition to having high-quality small-scale maps, the atlas will include authoritative digital national geospatial and geostatistical data sets. Examples of geospatial data include soils, boundaries, volcanoes, and underground water bodies. Crime patterns, population distribution, and incidence of disease are examples of geostatistical data. This information is tied to specific geographic areas and is

categorized and indexed using different methods, such as county, State, and zip code boundaries or geographic coordinates like latitude and longitude. These data will be collected and integrated to a consistent set of standards to support analysis. The atlas will also include easy-to-use software for data display, query, and custom information and map making. The product will include hot links to atlas sites on the WWW. More up-to-date, real-time, and regional data will be served by means of the WWW. Descriptive information, marketing products, and software programs will also be delivered through the WWW.

New Customers

In the early 1970's, *The National Atlas of the United States of America™* was typically found in the reference collections of libraries across the United States. Educators and government organizations were also primary customers for the original publication. Because the sales price was \$100, not many Americans were adding the atlas to their home libraries. The new National Atlas is

designed for individuals who own powerful home computers. This is not a group of customers that is typically addressed by USGS programs and products. Therefore, the USGS is seeking strategic alliances with commercial partners to gather and analyze customer information and to assess the market for the National Atlas. Efforts in 1997 are concentrated on identifying customers, determining their expectations, and using this information to sharpen product definitions. The USGS will also pursue partnerships to make products that are responsive to the needs of secondary markets like education, business, and libraries.

Information

For more information on *The National Atlas of the United States of America*TM, please contact:

National Atlas
U.S. Geological Survey
508 National Center
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive
Reston, VA 20192

Additional up-to-date information is available on our Web page:

<URL: <http://www.usgs.gov/atlas>>

For information on other USGS products and services, call 1-800-USA-MAPS, or use the EARTHFAX fax-on-demand system, which is available 24 hours a day at 703-648-4888.

Please visit the USGS home page at
<URL: <http://www.usgs.gov/>>